

BRANCHING RULES FOR FINITE-DIMENSIONAL $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ -REPRESENTATIONS WITH RESPECT TO A RIGHT COIDEAL SUBALGEBRA

NOUD ALDENHOVEN, ERIK KOELINK, AND PABLO ROMÁN

ABSTRACT. We consider the quantum symmetric pair $(\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3)), \mathcal{B})$ where \mathcal{B} is a right coideal subalgebra. We prove that all finite-dimensional irreducible representations of \mathcal{B} are weight representations and are characterised by their highest weight and dimension.

We show that the restriction of a finite-dimensional irreducible representation of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ to \mathcal{B} decomposes multiplicity free into irreducible representations of \mathcal{B} . Furthermore we give explicit expressions for the highest weight vectors in this decomposition in terms of dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials.

1. INTRODUCTION

The theory of quantum symmetric pairs of Lie groups has been developed by Koornwinder, Dijkhuizen, Noumi and Sugitani and others [2, 3, 22, 20, 21, 24] for classical Lie groups and by G. Letzter [13, 15, 16, 17, 18] for all semisimple Lie algebras, see also [10]. The motivating example for the development for this theory was given by Koornwinder [11], who studied scalar-valued spherical functions on the quantum analogue of $(\mathrm{SU}(2), \mathrm{U}(1))$ considering twisted primitive elements in the quantised universal enveloping algebra of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{sl}(2))$. Koornwinder identified all scalar-valued spherical functions with Askey-Wilson polynomials in two free parameters. Dijkhuizen and Noumi [2] extended the work of Koornwinder to quantum analogues of $(\mathrm{SU}(n+1), \mathrm{U}(n))$ considering two sided coideals of the quantised universal enveloping algebra of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{gl}(n+1))$. More generally, Letzter considered the quantised universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g})$ with a right coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} , which is the quantum analogue of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{k})$ for a Cartan decomposition $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{k} \oplus \mathfrak{p}$. In [17] all scalar-valued spherical functions for quantum symmetric pairs with reduced restricted root systems are identified with Macdonald polynomials. However, the requirement of having a reduced restricted root system excludes the quantum analogue of $(\mathrm{SU}(3), \mathrm{U}(2))$.

One recent extension of this situation [1] arises with the study of matrix-valued spherical functions of the quantum analogue of $(\mathrm{SU}(2) \times \mathrm{SU}(2), \mathrm{diag})$ where higher-dimensional representations of coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} are involved. The quantum symmetric pair is given by the quantised universal enveloping algebra of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g})$, where $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{su}(2) \oplus \mathfrak{su}(2)$, and a right coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} than can be identified with $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(2))$. As in the Lie group setting [8, 9, 25, 5], the explicit knowledge of the branching rules plays a fundamental role in the explicit determination of the matrix-valued spherical functions. In this first case, the branching rules for the irreducible representations of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g})$ with respect to \mathcal{B} follow using the standard Clebsch-Gordan decomposition.

One of the first technical difficulties that one finds to extend the results of [1] to more general quantum symmetric pairs is the lack of the explicit branching rules for finite-dimensional

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$\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g})$ -representations with respect to a right coideal subalgebra. In this paper we deal with this problem for the quantised universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ with a right coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} as in Kolb [10]. We study the problem of describing all irreducible representations that occur in the restriction to \mathcal{B} of finite-dimensional irreducible representations of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$. In general, information about branching rules for quantum symmetric pairs $(\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g}), \mathcal{B})$ as in Kolb [10] and Letzter [13, 15] is relatively scarce in particular in case the coideal subalgebra depends on an additional parameter as in this paper. However see Oblomkov and Stokman [23] for partial information on the branching rules for the quantum analogue of $(\mathfrak{gl}(2n), \mathfrak{gl}(n) \oplus \mathfrak{gl}(n))$.

This paper is organised as follows. In Section 2 we review the construction of the quantised universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ and its finite dimensional irreducible representations. Then we collect a series of commutation identities for the generators of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ and we introduce an orthogonal basis for finite-dimensional $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ -representations which is an analogue of Mudrov [19]. We also describe the action of the generators of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ on this basis. In Section 3 we fix a right coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} of the quantised universal enveloping algebra which depends on two complex parameters c_1, c_2 . We describe the generators of the Cartan subalgebra of \mathcal{B} and we use them to classify all finite-dimensional irreducible representations of \mathcal{B} under a mild genericity condition on the parameters. More precisely we prove that every finite-dimensional irreducible representation of \mathcal{B} is completely characterised by its highest weight and its dimension. In Section 4 we prove the main theorem of the paper. We show that any irreducible finite-dimensional representation of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ decomposes multiplicity free into irreducible representations of the \mathcal{B} and we characterise the representations that occur in the decomposition by their highest weight and dimension. The highest weight vectors of the coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} -representations are obtained by diagonalising an element of the Cartan subalgebra of \mathcal{B} restricted to a certain subspace where it acts tridiagonally. The eigenvectors can be then identified explicitly in terms of dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials.

2. THE QUANTISED UNIVERSAL ENVELOPING ALGEBRA $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$

Let $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}(3) = \{X \in \mathfrak{gl}(3, \mathbb{C}) : \text{tr}(X) = 0\}$. We fix the Cartan subalgebra \mathfrak{h} of diagonal matrices. Let $A = (a_{i,j})_{i,j}$ be the Cartan matrix for \mathfrak{g} , i.e. $a_{i,i} = 2$, $i = 1, 2$, and $a_{i,j} = -1$ for $i \neq j$. Let $R \subset \mathfrak{h}$ denote the root system of \mathfrak{g} . We denote by R^+ the subset of positive roots, so that we have the decomposition $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{n}^- \oplus \mathfrak{h} \oplus \mathfrak{n}^+$. We denote by (\cdot, \cdot) the canonical inner product on \mathfrak{h} and by $\Pi = \{\alpha_1, \alpha_2\}$ the simple roots so that $(\alpha_i, \alpha_j) = a_{i,j}$. The fundamental weights are given by $\varpi_1 = \frac{2}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{1}{3}\alpha_2$ and $\varpi_2 = \frac{1}{3}\alpha_1 + \frac{2}{3}\alpha_2$.

The quantised universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ is the unital associative algebra generated by E_i, F_i and $K_i^{\pm 1}$, where $i = 1, 2$, subject to the relations

$$(2.1) \quad \begin{aligned} K_i^{\pm 1} K_j^{\pm 1} &= K_j^{\pm 1} K_i^{\pm 1}, \quad K_i^{\pm 1} K_j^{\mp 1} = K_j^{\mp 1} K_i^{\pm 1}, \quad K_i K_i^{-1} = 1 = K_i^{-1} K_i, \\ K_i E_j &= q^{(\alpha_i, \alpha_j)} E_j K_i, \quad K_i F_j = q^{-(\alpha_i, \alpha_j)} F_j K_i, \quad [E_i, F_j] = \frac{K_i - K_i^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \delta_{i,j}, \end{aligned}$$

for $i, j = 1, 2$ and, for $i \neq j$, the quantum Serre's relations

$$(2.2) \quad E_i^2 E_j - (q + q^{-1}) E_i E_j E_i + E_j E_i^2 = 0 = F_i^2 F_j - (q + q^{-1}) F_i F_j F_i + F_j F_i^2.$$

We assume that $q \in [0, 1]$. The quantised universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ has a Hopf algebra structure with comultiplication Δ , counit ϵ and antipode S defined by

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta : E_i, F_i, K_i^{\pm 1} &\mapsto E_i \otimes 1 + K_i \otimes E_i, F_i \otimes K_i^{-1} + 1 \otimes F_i, K_i^{\pm 1} \otimes K_i^{\pm 1}, \\ \epsilon : E_i, F_i, K_i^{\pm 1} &\mapsto 0, 0, 1, \quad S : E_i, F_i, K_i^{\pm 1} \mapsto -K_i^{-1} E_i, -F_i K_i, K_i^{\mp 1},\end{aligned}$$

with $i = 1, 2$. The $*$ -structure on $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ is given by

$$(2.3) \quad E_i^* = K_i F_i, \quad F_i^* = E_i K_i^{-1}, \quad (K_i^{\pm 1})^* = K_i^{\pm 1}, \quad i = 1, 2,$$

so that $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ is a Hopf $*$ -algebra. Following Mudrov [19] we define for $a \in \mathbb{R}$

$$\begin{aligned}F_3 &= [F_1, F_2]_q = F_1 F_2 - q F_2 F_1, \quad E_3 = [E_2, E_1]_q = E_2 E_1 - q E_1 E_2, \\ \hat{F}_3[a] &= F_1 F_2 \left(\frac{q^{a+1} K_2 - q^{-a-1} K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \right) - F_2 F_1 \left(\frac{q^a K_2 - q^{-a} K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \right), \\ \hat{E}_3[a] &= \left(\frac{q^{a+1} K_2 - q^{-a-1} K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \right) E_2 E_1 - \left(\frac{q^a K_2 - q^{-a} K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \right) E_1 E_2,\end{aligned}$$

and $\hat{F}_3 = \hat{F}_3[0]$, $\hat{E}_3 = \hat{E}_3[0]$.

Lemma 2.1. *The following relations hold in $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$:*

- (i) $F_1 \hat{F}_3[a] = \hat{F}_3[a] F_1$,
- (ii) $E_2 \hat{F}_3[a] = \hat{F}_3[a - 2] E_2 - \frac{(q^a - q^{-a})}{(q - q^{-1})} F_1$,
- (iii) $K_i \hat{F}_3[a] = q^{-1} \hat{F}_3[a] K_i$, $K_i \hat{E}_3[a] = q \hat{E}_3[a] K_i$, $i = 1, 2$.

Proof. Straightforward verifications using (2.1) and (2.3). □

Lemma 2.2. *For $i = 1, 2$:*

(i)

$$E_i F_i^k = F_i^k E_i + \frac{q^k - q^{-k}}{q - q^{-1}} F_i^{k-1} \frac{q^{1-k} K_i - q^{k-1} K_i^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}}$$

(ii)

$$\begin{aligned}E_i^k F_i^k &= \frac{q^k (q^2; q^2)_k}{(1 - q^2)^{2k}} (q^{2-2k} K_i^2; q^2)_k K_i^{-k} + \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3)) E_i \\ &= \frac{(q^2; q^2)_k}{(1 - q^2)^{2k}} (-1)^k q^{-k(k-2)} (K_i^{-2}; q^2)_k K_i^k + \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3)) E_i.\end{aligned}$$

Proof. Straightforward verifications using (2.1) and (2.3) and induction. □

2.1. The finite-dimensional representations of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$. Finite-dimensional representations of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ are weight representations and are uniquely determined, up to equivalence, by their highest weights. Let (π_λ, V_λ) be an irreducible finite-dimensional representation with highest weight $\lambda = \lambda_1 \varpi_1 + \lambda_2 \varpi_2$, $\lambda_1, \lambda_2 \in \mathbb{N}$, and v_λ a highest weight vector such that

$$(2.4) \quad E_i v_\lambda = 0, \quad K_i v_\lambda = q^{(\lambda, \alpha_i)} v_\lambda = q^{\lambda_i} v_\lambda.$$

Then the dimension of V_λ is the same as the dimension of the corresponding irreducible representation π_λ of $\mathfrak{su}(3)$, namely

$$\dim(V_\lambda) = \frac{1}{2}(\lambda_1 + 1)(\lambda_2 + 1)(\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + 2).$$

Furthermore for a weight $\nu = \nu_1 \varpi_1 + \nu_2 \varpi_2$, the dimension of the weight space

$$V_\lambda(\nu) = \{v \in V_\lambda : K_i v = q^{(\nu, \alpha_i)} v, \ i = 1, 2\},$$

and the dimension of the weight space corresponding to the weight ν in the representation of $\mathfrak{su}(3)$ coincide, see [6, Ch. 7]. In particular, $\dim(V_\lambda(\lambda)) = 1$. The vector space V_λ is generated by the vectors v_λ and $F_{i_1} F_{i_2} \dots F_{i_m} v_\lambda$, $i_j \in \{1, 2\}$ and is equipped with an inner product $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ that satisfies

$$\langle v_\lambda, v_\lambda \rangle = 1, \quad \langle X v, w \rangle = \langle v, X^* w \rangle, \quad \forall X \in \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3)), \quad \forall v, w \in V_\lambda.$$

Mudrov [19] describes the Shapovalov basis for the Verma modules of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$, and we have adapted his proof and construction to an orthonormal basis for the finite-dimensional unitary representations of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$. For completeness, we have sketched the proof in Appendix A. It is essentially due to Mudrov [19, §8].

Theorem 2.3. *The set of vectors*

$$\mathcal{B} = \{F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \mid 0 \leq m \leq \lambda_1, \ 0 \leq l \leq \lambda_2, \ 0 \leq k \leq \lambda_2 + m - l\}$$

forms an orthogonal basis for V_λ . Explicitly,

$$\langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle = \delta_{k,k'} \delta_{l,l'} \delta_{m,m'} H_{k,l,m},$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} H_{k,l,m} &= (q^2, q^{-2(\lambda_2-l+m)}; q^2)_k (q^2, q^{-2\lambda_1}; q^2)_m (q^2, q^{-2\lambda_2}, q^{-2(\lambda_2+1+m)}, q^{-2(\lambda_1+\lambda_2+1)}; q^2)_l \\ &\quad \times (1 - q^2)^{-2(k+2l+m)} (-1)^{k+l+m} q^{3(k+3l+m)} q^{-l(l-2m)} q^{-2l\lambda_2}. \end{aligned}$$

In Theorem 2.3 we use the standard notation in [4] for q -shifted factorials

$$\begin{aligned} (q^a; q)_n &= (1 - q^a)(1 - q^{a+1}) \dots (1 - q^{a+n-1}), \\ (q^{a_1}, q^{a_2}, \dots, q^{a_j}; q)_n &= (q^{a_1}, q)_n (q^{a_2}, q)_n \dots (q^{a_j}, q)_n. \end{aligned}$$

Note that $H_{k,l,m}$ is indeed positive. In the following proposition we calculate the action of the generators of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ in the basis \mathcal{B} of Theorem 2.3.

Proposition 2.4. *In the basis \mathcal{B} of V_λ as in Theorem 2.3 we have*

- (i) $K_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = q^{\lambda_1+k-l-2m} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$,
- (ii) $K_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = q^{\lambda_2-2k-l+m} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$,
- (iii) $F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = a_k(l, m) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda + b_k(l, m) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda$,
- (iv) $E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = \alpha_k(l, m) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m-1} v_\lambda + \beta_k(l, m) F_2^{k+1} \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^m v_\lambda$,
- (v) $F_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = F_2^{k+1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$,
- (vi) $E_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = \eta_k(l, m) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$,

with coefficients

$$\begin{aligned}
a_k(l, m) &= \frac{(q^{\lambda_2+m+1-k-l} - q^{-\lambda_2-m-1+k+l})}{(q^{\lambda_2+m+1-l} - q^{-\lambda_2-m-1+l})}, & b_k(l, m) &= \frac{(q^k - q^{-k})}{(q^{\lambda_2+m+1-l} - q^{-\lambda_2-m-1+l})}, \\
\eta_k(l, m) &= \frac{q^k - q^{-k}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q^{1-k+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{k-1-\lambda_2+l-m}}{q - q^{-1}}, \\
\alpha_k(l, m) &= \frac{(q^m - q^{-m})(q^{\lambda_1-m+1} - q^{-\lambda_1+m-1})(q^{\lambda_2+m+1} - q^{-\lambda_2-m-1})}{(q - q^{-1})^2 (q^{\lambda_2+m-l+1} - q^{-\lambda_2-m+l-1})}, \\
\beta_k(l, m) &= \frac{(q^l - q^{-l})(q^{\lambda_2-l+1} - q^{-\lambda_2+l-1})(q^{\lambda_1+\lambda_2-l+2} - q^{-\lambda_1-\lambda_2+l-2})}{(q - q^{-1})^2 (q^{\lambda_2+m-l+1} - q^{-\lambda_2-m+l-1})}.
\end{aligned}$$

Remark 2.5. Note that the denominators in $a_k(l, m)$, $b_k(l, m)$, $\eta_k(l, m)$, $\alpha_k(l, m)$ and $\beta_k(l, m)$ are non-zero by the ranges of k, l, m as in Theorem 2.3.

Proof. The action of K_i , $i = 1, 2$, follows from (2.4), (2.1) and Lemma 2.1(iii). The action of F_2 is trivial. The action of E_2 follows from Lemma 2.2(i), Lemma 2.1(ii) and (2.4) and the established actions of K_2 . This completes the proof of (i), (ii), (v) and (vi).

In order to establish the action of F_1 , we first show that there exist constants a_k and b_k so that

$$F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = a_k F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda + b_k F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda$$

by induction with respect to k . The case $k = 0$ with $a_0 = 1$, $b_0 = 0$ is immediate from Lemma 2.1(i). In case $k = 1$, we write

$$\begin{aligned}
F_1 F_2 \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda &= F_1 F_2 \frac{qK_2 - q^{-1}K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q - q^{-1}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \\
&= \frac{q - q^{-1}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}} \left(\hat{F}_3 + F_2 F_1 \frac{K_2 - K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \right) \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \\
&= \frac{q^{\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-\lambda_2+l-m}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}} F_2 \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda \\
&\quad + \frac{q - q^{-1}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda
\end{aligned}$$

again using Lemma 2.1(i). So the case $k = 1$ is proved with

$$a_1 = \frac{q^{\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-\lambda_2+l-m}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}}, \quad b_1 = \frac{q - q^{-1}}{q^{1+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-1-\lambda_2+l-m}}.$$

For the induction we assume $k \geq 2$, so that

$$F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = F_1 F_2^2 F_2^{k-2} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda = (-F_2^2 F_1 + (q + q^{-1}) F_2 F_1 F_2) F_2^{k-2} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$$

by the q -Serre relation (2.2). Using the induction hypothesis, we find

$$\begin{aligned}
F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda &= -F_2^2 (a_{k-2} F_2^{k-2} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda + b_{k-2} F_2^{k-3} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda) \\
&\quad + (q + q^{-1}) F_2 (a_{k-1} F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda + b_{k-1} F_2^{k-2} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda) \\
&= (-a_{k-2} + (q + q^{-1}) a_{k-1}) F_2^2 \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m+1} v_\lambda + (-b_{k-2} + (q + q^{-1}) b_{k-1}) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^m v_\lambda
\end{aligned}$$

which proves the induction step as well as the recurrence

$$a_k + a_{k-2} = (q + q^{-1}) a_{k-1}, \quad b_k + b_{k-2} = (q + q^{-1}) b_{k-1}, \quad k \geq 2.$$

This recursion is solved by the Chebyshev polynomials (of the second kind) at $\frac{1}{2}(q + q^{-1})$ as well as by the associated Chebyshev polynomials. This gives the solution for the recurrences and proves (iii)

The action of E_1 follows from that of F_1 , considering the adjoint. Note that

$$\begin{aligned} \langle E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle &= \langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, E_1^* F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= \langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, K_1 F_1 F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle, \end{aligned}$$

equals zero if $(k', l', m') \neq (k, l, m+1), (k+1, l-1, m)$. Moreover we have

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha_k(l, m) H_{k,l,m-1} &= \langle E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m-1} v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= \langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, K_1 F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{m-1} v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= q^{k-l-2m+\lambda_1} a_k(l, m-1) H_{k,l,m}, \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \beta_k(l, m) H_{k+1,l-1,m} &= \langle E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k+1} \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= \langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, K_1 F_1 F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= q^{k-l-2m+\lambda_1+2} b_{k+1}(l-1, m) H_{k,l,m}. \end{aligned}$$

Now the expressions of $\alpha_k(l, m)$ and $\beta_k(l, m)$ follow from the explicit expression of $H_{k,l,m}$ Theorem 2.3 by a straightforward computation. \square

3. THE COIDEAL SUBALGEBRA

In this section we follow Kolb [10] and introduce a right coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ which is the quantum analogue of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{k})$ with $\mathfrak{k} = \mathfrak{u}(2)$ embedded in $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{su}(3)$. Let $c_1, c_2 \in \mathbb{C}^\times$ and write $c = (c_1, c_2)$. Following [10, Example 9.4], $\mathcal{B}_c = \mathcal{B}$ is the right coideal subalgebra of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$, i.e. $\Delta(\mathcal{B}) \subset \mathcal{B} \otimes \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$, generated by

$$(3.1) \quad K^{\pm 1} = (K_1 K_2^{-1})^{\pm 1}, \quad B_1^c = B_1 = F_1 - c_1 E_2 K_1^{-1}, \quad B_2^c = B_2 = F_2 - c_2 E_1 K_2^{-1}.$$

Throughout Sections 3 and 4 we omit the subscript and superscript c in \mathcal{B}_c and B_i^c since the coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} will be fixed.

If we assume $c_1 \overline{c_2} = q^3 = \overline{c_1} c_2$ then it follows that $B_1^* = -\overline{c_1} K^{-1} B_2$, $B_2^* = -\overline{c_2} K B_1$ and $K^* = K$, so that $\mathcal{B}^* = \mathcal{B}$. By a straightforward computation we have

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta(B_1) &= B_1 \otimes K_1^{-1} + 1 \otimes F_1 - c_1 K^{-1} \otimes E_2 K_1^{-1}, \\ \Delta(B_2) &= B_2 \otimes K_2^{-1} + 1 \otimes F_2 - c_2 K \otimes E_1 K_2^{-1}. \end{aligned}$$

The Serre relations for \mathcal{B} follow from [10, Lemma 7.2, Theorem 7.4] taking $\mathcal{Z}_1 = -K^{-1}$ and $\mathcal{Z}_2 = -K$

$$(3.2) \quad \begin{aligned} B_1^2 B_2 - [2]_q B_1 B_2 B_1 + B_2 B_1^2 &= [2]_q (q c_2 K + q^{-2} c_1 K^{-1}) B_1, \\ B_2^2 B_1 - [2]_q B_2 B_1 B_2 + B_1 B_2^2 &= [2]_q (q c_1 K^{-1} + q^{-2} c_2 K) B_2. \end{aligned}$$

Alternatively (3.2) can be verified directly from the definitions of B_1 , B_2 and K .

The Cartan subalgebra of \mathcal{B} is generated by $K^{\pm 1}$, C_1 and C_2 , where

$$(3.3) \quad \begin{aligned} C_1 &= B_1 B_2 - q B_2 B_1 - \frac{1}{q - q^{-1}} c_2 K + \frac{q + q^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} c_1 K^{-1}, \\ C_2 &= B_2 B_1 - q B_1 B_2 - \frac{1}{q - q^{-1}} c_1 K^{-1} + \frac{q + q^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} c_2 K. \end{aligned}$$

Moreover if $c_1, c_2 \in \mathbb{R}^\times$, then C_1 and C_2 are self-adjoint. The generators of the Cartan subalgebra of \mathcal{B} satisfy the relations $[K, C_i] = 0$ for $i = 1, 2$, $[C_1, C_2] = 0$ and

$$(3.4) \quad \begin{aligned} K B_1 &= q^{-3} B_1 K, & C_1 B_1 &= q B_1 C_1, & C_2 B_1 &= q^{-1} B_1 C_2, \\ K B_2 &= q^3 B_2 K, & C_1 B_2 &= q^{-1} B_2 C_1, & C_2 B_2 &= q B_2 C_2. \end{aligned}$$

Note that by [12, Theorem 8.5] the center of \mathcal{B} is of rank 2. Hence the center of \mathcal{B} is generated by $K^{\frac{1}{3}} C_1$ and $K^{-\frac{1}{3}} C_2$, extending \mathcal{B} by cube roots of K . Then the central elements are self-adjoint for $c_1, c_2 \in \mathbb{R}^\times$.

3.1. Representation theory of \mathcal{B} . Let (τ, W) be a finite-dimensional representation of \mathcal{B} . Since W is a finite-dimensional complex vector space, there exists a vector $w \in W$ such that $\tau(K)w = \nu w$ for some $\nu \in \mathbb{C}$. Then it follows from (3.4) that

$$\tau(K)\tau(B_1)^i w = q^{-3i} \tau(B_1)^i \tau(K)w = q^{-3i} \nu \tau(B_1)^i w, \quad i \in \mathbb{N},$$

so that the vectors $(\tau(B_1)^i w)_i$ are eigenvectors of $\tau(K)$ with different eigenvalues. Since W is finite-dimensional, there exists $j \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $\tau(B_1^{j+1})w = 0$ and $\tau(B_1^j)w \neq 0$. Therefore $w_0 = \tau(B_1^j)w$ is a highest weight vector, i.e.

$$\tau(B_1)w_0 = 0, \quad \tau(K)w_0 = \kappa w_0, \quad q^{-3}\kappa \notin \sigma(K),$$

where κ is the weight of w_0 and $\sigma(K)$ is the spectrum of K . Note that $\kappa \in \mathbb{C}^\times$ since it is the eigenvalue of an invertible operator.

Proposition 3.1. *Let τ be a finite-dimensional irreducible representation of \mathcal{B} on the vector space W . Then τ is determined by the dimension of W and the action of K on a highest weight vector.*

Proof. Let $\kappa \in \mathbb{C}^\times$ be the highest weight of τ and let w_0 be a highest weight vector, i.e. $\tau(K)w_0 = \kappa w_0$ and $\tau(B_1)w_0 = 0$. Since $\tau(K), \tau(C_1)$ and $\tau(C_2)$ form a commuting family of operators, we can assume that $\tau(C_1)w_0 = \eta_1 w_0$ and $\tau(C_2)w_0 = \eta_2 w_0$. For every $i \in \mathbb{N}$, we define the vector $w_i = \tau(B_2)^i w_0 \in W$. Since W is finite-dimensional, there exists $n \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $w_i \neq 0$ for $0 \leq i \leq n$ and $w_{n+1} = 0$. It follows from (3.4) that $\tau(K)w_i = q^{3i} \kappa w_i$, so that $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ is a set of linearly independent vectors since they are eigenvectors of $\tau(K)$ for different eigenvalues. Moreover (3.4) implies

$$\tau(C_1)w_i = \tau(C_1)\tau(B_2)^i w_0 = q^{-i} \tau(B_2)^i \tau(C_1)w_0 = \eta_1 q^{-i} w_i,$$

and similarly $\tau(C_2)w_i = \eta_2 q^i w_i$. We will show that it is indeed a basis of W .

We prove by induction in i that there exist $b_i \in \mathbb{C}$ such that $\tau(B_1)w_i = b_i w_{i-1}$ for $i = 0, \dots, n$. The statement holds for $i = 0$ taking $b_0 = 0$ since w_0 is a highest weight vector. Let $i > 0$ and assume that $\tau(B_1)w_j = b_j w_{j-1}$ for all $j < i$. Using (3.3) we find the recurrence

relation

$$\begin{aligned}
\tau(B_1)w_i &= \tau(B_1)\tau(B_2)^i w_0 = \tau(B_1 B_2)w_{i+1} \\
&= \tau \left(C_1 + qB_2 B_1 + \frac{c_2}{(q - q^{-1})} K - \frac{(q + q^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})} c_1 K^{-1} \right) w_{i-1} \\
&= q\tau(B_2 B_1)w_{i-1} + \tau \left(C_1 + \frac{c_2}{(q - q^{-1})} K - \frac{(q + q^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})} c_1 K^{-1} \right) w_{i-1},
\end{aligned}$$

By the inductive hypothesis, $\tau(B_2 B_1)w_{i-1} = b_{i-1}\tau(B_2)w_{i-2} = b_{i-1}w_{i-1}$, so that

$$(3.5) \quad \tau(B_1)w_i = \left(qb_{i-1} + q^{1-i}\eta_1 + \frac{q^{3i-3}\kappa c_2}{(q - q^{-1})} - \frac{(q + q^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})} q^{3-3i}\kappa^{-1} c_1 \right) w_{i-1}.$$

Hence $\tau(B_1)w_i = b_i w_{i-1}$. Since τ is an irreducible representation we have that $W = \tau(\mathcal{B})w_0 = \langle \{w_0, w_1, \dots, w_n\} \rangle$, and therefore $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ is a basis of W . This completes the proof of the proposition. \square

Remark 3.2. Since we assume (τ, W) irreducible, the coefficients b_i in the proof of Proposition 3.1 are non-zero for $i = 1, \dots, n$. This follows from the fact that if $b_{i_0} = 0$ for some $1 \leq i_0 \leq n$, then $\langle \{w_{i_0}, w_{i_0+1}, \dots, w_n\} \rangle$ is an invariant subspace and this contradicts the irreducibility of τ .

Corollary 3.3. *Let (τ, W) be a finite-dimensional irreducible representation of \mathcal{B} of dimension $n + 1$ and highest weight κ . let w_0 be a highest weight vector and let $w_i = (B_2)^i w_0$ for $i = 1, \dots, n$. Then $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ is a basis of W . The action of the generators of \mathcal{B} on this basis is given by*

$$\tau(K)w_j = q^{3j}\kappa w_j, \quad \tau(B_2)w_j = w_{j+1}, \quad \tau(B_1)w_j = b_j w_{j-1}$$

where

$$b_0 = 0, \quad b_j = c_1 \kappa^{-1} q^{-2n-1} [j]_q \frac{(1 - q^{2n-2j+2})(1 + c_2 c_1^{-1} \kappa^2 q^{2j+2n-1})}{(q - q^{-1})}.$$

Moreover, $\tau(C_1)w_j = q^{-j}\eta_1 w_j$ and $\tau(C_2)w_j = q^j\eta_2 w_j$, where

$$\eta_1 = \frac{c_1 \kappa^{-1} q(1 + q^{-2n-2}) - c_2 \kappa q^{2n}}{q - q^{-1}}, \quad \eta_2 = \frac{c_2 \kappa q^{-1}(1 + q^{2n+2}) - c_1 \kappa^{-1} q^{-2n}}{q - q^{-1}}.$$

Proof. The fact that $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ is a basis of W and the action of $\tau(K)$ on w_j follow directly from the proof of Proposition 3.1. It is clear that $b_0 = 0$. We now show that

$$(3.6) \quad b_j = [j]_q \left(\eta_1 + \frac{c_2 \kappa q^{2j-2} - c_1 \kappa^{-1} q^{1-2j}(1 + q^{2j})}{(q - q^{-1})} \right),$$

for all $j = 1, \dots, n$. We proceed by induction on i . If $i = 1$, then the statement follows directly from (3.5). Now we assume that (3.6) is true for some j , $1 < j \leq n$. Then it follows from (3.5) and the inductive hypothesis that

$$\begin{aligned}
b_j &= q[j-1]_q \left(\eta_1 + \frac{c_2 \kappa q^{2j-4} - c_1 \kappa^{-1} q^{3-2j}(1 + q^{2j-2})}{(q - q^{-1})} \right) \\
&\quad + q^{1-j}\eta_1 + \frac{q^{3j-3}\kappa c_2}{(q - q^{-1})} - \frac{(q + q^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})} q^{3-3j}\kappa^{-1} c_1.
\end{aligned}$$

Now (3.6) follows by a straightforward computation.

It follows from the proof of Proposition 3.1 that $\tau(C_1)w_j = q^{-j}\eta_1 w_j$ where η_1 is the eigenvalue for the highest weight vector w_0 . From the construction of the vectors w_i in Proposition (3.1), it follows that $\tau(B_2)w_n = 0$. Hence (3.3) and (3.6) yield

$$\begin{aligned} q^{-n}\eta_1 w_n &= \tau(C_1)w_n = q\tau(B_2B_1)w_n - \frac{1}{q-q^{-1}}c_2\tau(K)w_n + \frac{q+q^{-1}}{q-q^{-1}}c_1\tau(K^{-1})w_n \\ &= -\frac{q^{n+1}-q^{-n+1}}{q-q^{-1}}\eta_1 - \frac{q^{n+1}-q^{-n+1}}{q-q^{-1}}\left(\frac{c_2\kappa q^{2n-2}-c_2\kappa^{-1}q^{1-2n}(1+q^{2n})}{q-q^{-1}}\right) \\ &\quad - \frac{c_2\kappa q^{3n}}{q-q^{-1}} + \frac{(q+q^{-1})c_1\kappa^{-1}q^{-3n}}{q-q^{-1}}. \end{aligned}$$

Now the expression of η_1 follows by a straightforward computation. The expression of η_2 can be obtained similarly from the action of C_2 on w_n . \square

Remark 3.4. If τ is an irreducible representation with highest weight κ and dimension $n+1$, it follows from Remark 3.2 and the explicit expression of the coefficient b_i in Corollary 3.3 that $c_2c_1^{-1}\kappa^2 \neq -q^{-2j-2n+1}$ for all $j = 1, \dots, n$.

Remark 3.5. It follows from Proposition 3.1 and Corollary 3.3 that a finite-dimensional irreducible representation (τ, W) of \mathcal{B} is completely determined by the highest weight κ and the eigenvalue of η_1 of the highest weight vector as eigenvector of $\tau(C_1)$.

Corollary 3.6. *Every irreducible finite-dimensional representation of \mathcal{B} is determined by a pair (κ, n) where κ is the highest weight and the dimension is $n+1$. Conversely, to each pair (κ, n) with $\kappa \in \mathbb{C}^\times$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $\kappa^2 \notin -c_1c_2^{-1}q^{1-\mathbb{N}}$, there corresponds an irreducible representation $(\tau_{(\kappa, n)}, W_{(\kappa, n)})$ with highest weight κ and dimension $n+1$.*

Proof. It follows directly from Proposition 3.1, Corollary 3.3 and Remark 3.4. \square

Proposition 3.7. *Assume that $\kappa \in \mathbb{R}^\times$ and $c_1\bar{c}_2 = q^3$. Let (τ, W) be an irreducible finite-dimensional representation of \mathcal{B} . Then τ is unitarizable.*

Proof. Since $c_1\bar{c}_2 = q^3$, we have that $\mathcal{B}^* = \mathcal{B}$. More precisely $B_1^* = -\bar{c}_1K^{-1}B_2$, $B_2^* = -\bar{c}_2KB_1$ and $K^* = K$. Let $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ be the basis of W given in Corollary 3.3 and let $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ be the hermitian bilinear form defined on the basis elements by $\langle w_0, w_0 \rangle = 1$,

$$\langle w_k, w_k \rangle = \langle \tau(((B_2)^k)^*(B_2)^k)w_0, w_0 \rangle, \quad \langle w_i, w_j \rangle = 0, \quad i \neq j.$$

Observe that

$$\begin{aligned} \langle w_k, w_k \rangle &= \langle \tau(((B_2)^k)^*(B_2)^k)w_0, w_0 \rangle \\ &= (-1)^k \bar{c}_2^k q^{3\binom{k}{2}} \langle \tau(K^k(B_1)^k(B_2)^k)w_0, w_0 \rangle = (-1)^k \bar{c}_2^k q^{3\binom{k}{2}} \langle \tau(K^k)w_0, w_0 \rangle \prod_{i=1}^k b_i \\ (3.7) \quad &= \frac{q^{3\binom{k}{2}-k(2n-1)}}{(1-q^2)^k} [k]_q! (q^{2n}; q^{-2})_k (-c_2c_1^{-1}\kappa^2 q^{2n-1}; q^2)_k \langle w_0, w_0 \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Since $q^3c_2c_1^{-1} = c_1\bar{c}_2c_2c_1^{-1} = |c_2|^2 > 0$, it follows that $c_2c_1^{-1} > 0$ and thus (3.7) is positive. Therefore $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ is a positive definite bilinear form. Moreover, $\langle \tau(X)w_i, w_j \rangle = \langle w_i, \tau(X^*)w_j \rangle$ for all $X \in \mathcal{B}$. This follows from a straightforward verification on the generators of \mathcal{B} . \square

Remark 3.8. Let $\kappa \in \mathbb{R}^\times$ and $n \in \mathbb{N}$. Let $(w_i)_{i=0}^n$ be the orthogonal basis for $W^{(\mu,n)}$ as in Corollary 3.3. We define an orthonormal basis $(\tilde{w}_i)_{i=0}^n$ by $\tilde{w}_i = w_i / \|w_i\|$. The actions of C_1 , C_2 and K on the orthonormal basis are the same. For B_1 and B_2 we have

$$\begin{aligned}\tau_{(\kappa,n)}(B_1)\tilde{w}_i &= -c_1 \kappa^{-1} q^{-2i-n+1} \sqrt{\frac{(1-q^{2i})}{(1-q^2)} \frac{(1-q^{2n-2i+2})}{(1-q^2)}} (q + c_2 c_1^{-1} \kappa^2 q^{2n+2i}) \tilde{w}_{i-1}, \\ \tau_{(\kappa,n)}(B_2)\tilde{w}_i &= q^{i-n+1} \sqrt{\frac{(1-q^{2i+2})}{(1-q^2)} \frac{(1-q^{2n-2i})}{(1-q^2)}} (q + c_2 c_1^{-1} \kappa^2 q^{2n+2i+2}) \tilde{w}_{i+1}.\end{aligned}$$

4. THE BRANCHING RULE

In this section we prove the main theorem of the paper. We fix a coideal subalgebra \mathcal{B} and show that any finite-dimensional representation of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ restricted to \mathcal{B} decomposes multiplicity free as finite-dimensional representations of \mathcal{B} and we characterise the \mathcal{B} -representations that occur in this decomposition. In case \mathcal{B} is $*$ -invariant, every finite-dimensional irreducible representation of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ restricted to \mathcal{B} obviously decomposes into finite-dimensional irreducible representations. This fact is also noted by Letzter [14, Theorem 3.3].

Theorem 4.1. *Let $\lambda \in P^+$ such that $\lambda = \lambda_1 \varpi_1 + \lambda_2 \varpi_2$ and fix the finite-dimensional irreducible representation π_λ of $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$ on the vector space V_λ . Let \mathcal{B} be a coideal subalgebra with $c_2 c_1^{-1} \notin -q^{2\lambda_1+2\lambda_2+1-\mathbb{N}}$. The representation π_λ restricted to \mathcal{B} decomposes multiplicity free into irreducible representations;*

$$\pi_\lambda|_{\mathcal{B}} \simeq \bigoplus_{(\kappa,n)} \tau_{(\kappa,n)}, \quad V_\lambda = \bigoplus_{(\kappa,n)} W_{(\kappa,n)},$$

where the sum is taken over $(\kappa, n) = (q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2-3i}, i+x)$, with $0 \leq i \leq \lambda_1$ and $0 \leq x \leq \lambda_2$.

The proof of Theorem 4.1 will be carried out in the next subsections. If $(\tau_{(\kappa,n)}, W_{(\kappa,n)})$ is a representation of \mathcal{B} that occurs in the representation π_λ upon restriction to \mathcal{B} then a highest weight vector $w_0^{(\mu,n)}$ for $\tau_{(\kappa,n)}$ is completely determined by the highest weight κ and the eigenvalue η_1 , see Remark 3.5. Hence, highest weight vectors for \mathcal{B} -representations in V_λ are the eigenvectors of $\pi_\lambda(C_1)$ that belong to the kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)$. In Subsection 4.1 we determine the kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)$.

Remark 4.2. Observe that the Serre relations (3.2) for \mathcal{B} imply that the kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)$ is invariant under the action of $B_1 B_2$ and thus under the action of C_1 .

In Subsection 4.2 we diagonalize the restriction of $\pi_\lambda(C_1)$ to $\ker(\pi_\lambda(B_1))$. In most of the proofs we identify $\pi_\lambda(X)$, $X \in \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$, with X .

Remark 4.3. The restriction on c_1 and c_2 in Theorem 4.1 is assumed in order to ensure the complete reducibility of π_λ upon restriction to \mathcal{B} . This is not always true for the excluded values of c_1 and c_2 . For example let $\lambda = \varpi_1$. Then V_λ is a three dimensional vector space. Mudrov's basis in Theorem 2.3 is given by

$$\mathcal{B} = \{v_\lambda, F_1 v_\lambda, F_2 F_1 v_\lambda\}.$$

In this basis, the operator C_1 is given by the 3×3 matrix

$$C_1 = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{c_1 q^2 + c_1 - q c_2}{q(q^2 - 1)} & 0 & -c_1 c_2 \\ 0 & \frac{x_1 q^4 + c_1 - q c_2}{q^2 - 1} & 0 \\ -q & 0 & \frac{c_1 q^4 + c_1 - q^3 c_2}{q(q^2 - 1)} \end{pmatrix}.$$

The eigenvectors of C_1 are (multiples of) the vectors

$$\rho_1 = \begin{pmatrix} c_1 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \rho_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \rho_3 = \begin{pmatrix} -c_2/q \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

If $c_1 \neq -c_2/q$, then V_λ decomposes as a sum of a two-dimensional and a one-dimensional irreducible representations of W :

$$V_\lambda = W_{(q,0)} \oplus W_{(q^{-2},1)},$$

where $W_{(q,0)} = \langle \{\rho_1\} \rangle$ and $W_{(q^{-2},1)} = \langle \{\rho_2, \rho_3\} \rangle$. Moreover, the highest weight vectors of $W_{(q,0)}$ and $W_{(q^{-2},1)}$ are ρ_1 and ρ_2 respectively. If we let $c_1 = -c_2/q$ then the matrix C_1 degenerates into a non-diagonalizable matrix. The only eigenvectors are the multiples of ρ_2 and ρ_3 and therefore, although $W_{(q^{-2},1)}$ is a \mathcal{B} -invariant subspace of V_λ , there is no one-dimensional \mathcal{B} -invariant subspace in V_λ .

4.1. The kernel of B_1 . The goal of this subsection is to describe the structure of the kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)$ by introducing a particular basis. For each $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, we introduce the following subspaces of V_λ :

$$(4.1) \quad U_i = \langle \mathcal{B}_i \rangle, \quad \mathcal{B}_i = \{F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{i+k} v_\lambda : 0 \leq l \leq \lambda_2, 0 \leq k \leq \lambda_1 - i\}.$$

It follows from weight space considerations, that $F_1, E_2 : U_i \rightarrow U_{i+1}$ and $F_2, E_1 : U_{i+1} \rightarrow U_i$ so that $B_1 : U_i \rightarrow U_{i+1}$ and $B_2 : U_{i+1} \rightarrow U_i$. This is shown in Figure 1 for the highest weight $\lambda = 2\varpi_1 + 5\varpi_2$.

Remark 4.4. For each $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, the basis \mathcal{B}_i consists on $\lambda_1 - i + 1$ layers of $\lambda_2 + 1$ vectors. More precisely, for $k = 0, \dots, \lambda_1 - i$, the k -th layer is given by the vectors

$$F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda, \quad l = 0, \dots, \lambda_2.$$

This structure is indicated in the Figure 2 for the representation $\lambda = 2\varpi_1 + 5\varpi_2$. The layers appear as circled numbers.

Remark 4.5. The dimension of U_i is $(\lambda_2 + 1)(\lambda_1 - i + 1)$. Therefore, the dimension of $\ker(B_1)|_{U_i}$ is, at least, $\lambda_2 + 1$. In particular, $U_{\lambda_1} \subset \ker(B_1)$.

Proposition 4.6. *The kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)|_{U_i}$ has dimension $\lambda_2 + 1$. Moreover, a basis of $\ker \pi_\lambda(B_1)|_{U_i}$ is given by $(u_n^i)_{n=0}^{\lambda_2}$, where*

$$u_n^i = \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \gamma_{k,l}^n F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda,$$

and the coefficients $\gamma_{k,l}^n$ are given by the recurrence relation

$$a_k(l, k+i) \gamma_{k,l}^n + b_{k+1}(l-1, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l-1}^n - c_1 q^{l+2i+k+1-\lambda_1} \eta_{k+1}(l, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l}^n = 0,$$

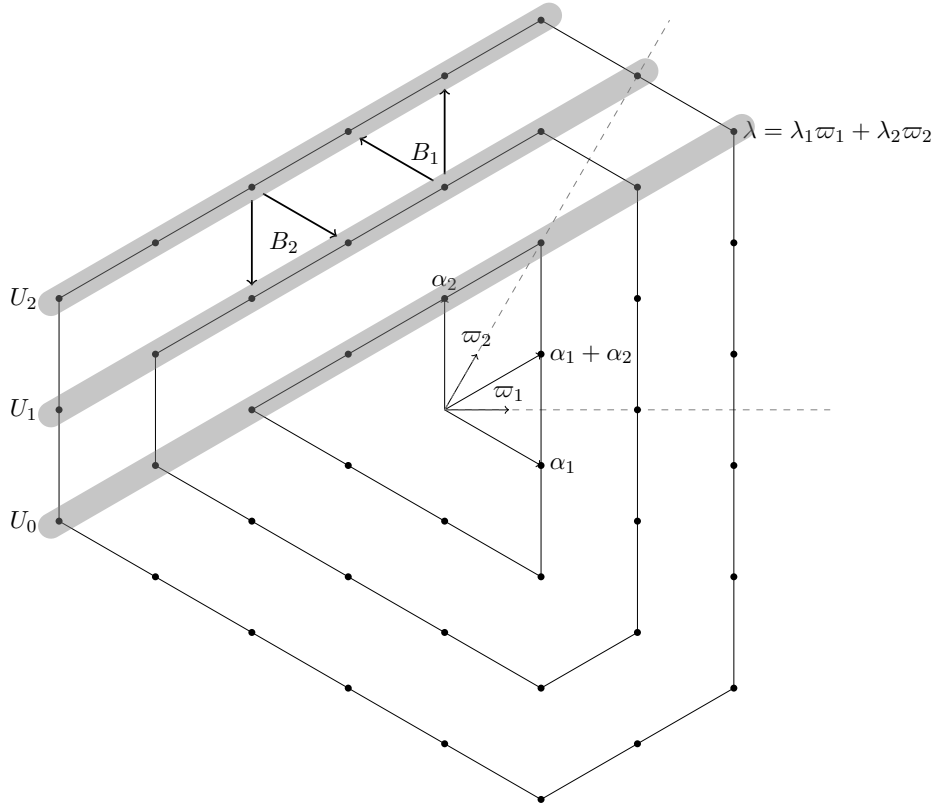


FIGURE 1. Weight diagram for the weight $\lambda = 2\varpi_1 + 5\varpi_2$. The subspaces U_i defined in (4.1) are spanned by the basis vectors indicated in gray.

for $k = 1, \dots, \lambda_1 - i - 1$, $l = 0, \dots, \lambda_2$, with initial values $\gamma_{\lambda_1-i,l}^n = \delta_{n,l}$.

Proof. Let $u = \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \gamma_{k,l} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda$ be a vector in the kernel of B_1 . Then

$$\begin{aligned}
 B_1 u &= \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \gamma_{k,l} (F_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda - c_1 E_2 K_1^{-1} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda) \\
 &= \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \gamma_{k,l} (a_k(l, k+i) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i+1} v_\lambda + b_k(l, k+i) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda \\
 &\quad - c_1 q^{l+2i+k-\lambda_1} \eta_k(l, k+i) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda) \\
 &= \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} (a_k(l, k+i) \gamma_{k,l} + b_{k+1}(l-1, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l-1} \\
 &\quad - c_1 q^{l+2i+k+1-\lambda_1} \eta_{k+1}(l, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l}) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i+1} v_\lambda.
 \end{aligned}$$

Since the elements $F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i+1}$, $0 \leq k \leq \lambda_1 - i$, $0 \leq l \leq \lambda_2$, are linearly independent it follows that the coefficients $\gamma_{k,l}$ satisfy the following recurrence relation.

$$(4.2) \quad a_k(l, k+i) \gamma_{k,l} + b_{k+1}(l-1, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l-1} - c_1 q^{l+2i+k+1-\lambda_1} \eta_{k+1}(l, k+i+1) \gamma_{k+1,l} = 0.$$

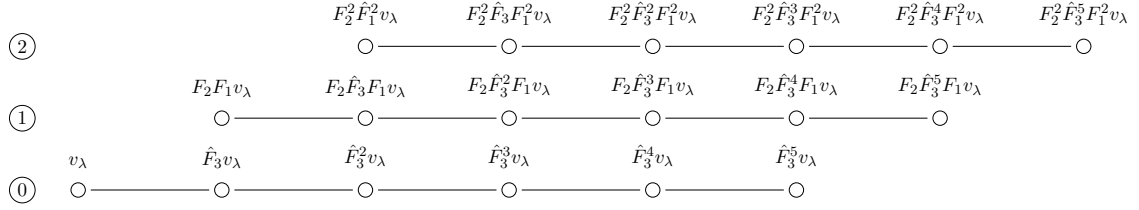


FIGURE 2. Structure of the basis of U_0 for the representation π_λ with $\lambda = 2\varpi_1 + 5\varpi_2$ as in Figure 1. The circled numbers indicate the layers of the basis.

For each $n = 0, 1, \dots, \lambda_2$, if we set $\gamma_{\lambda_1-i, l}^n = \delta_{n, l}$, then (4.2) determines uniquely a vector u_n in the kernel of B_1 . The vectors u_n are clearly linearly independent and span the kernel of B_1 restricted to U_i . This completes the proof of the proposition. \square

Remark 4.7. According to the layer structure of \mathcal{B}_i described in Remark 4.4, the vector u_n^i has a single non-zero contribution from the vectors of the upper layer, namely from $F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1}$, and two contributions from the one but upper layer. Therefore, we have

$$(4.3) \quad u_n^i = F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n F_2^{\lambda_1-i-1} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n F_2^{\lambda_1-i-1} \hat{F}_3^{n-1} F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda + \sum_{k=0}^{\lambda_1-i-2} \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \gamma_{k, l}^n F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{i+k} v_\lambda.$$

The coefficients $\gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n$ and $\gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n$ corresponding to the vectors of the one but last layer are given by

$$(4.4) \quad \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n = \frac{c_1 q^{n+i} (q^{\lambda_1-i} - q^{-\lambda_1+i}) (q^{\lambda_2+\lambda_1-n} - q^{-\lambda_2-\lambda_1+n})}{(q - q^{-1})^2},$$

$$\gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n = -\frac{(q^{\lambda_1-i} - q^{-\lambda_1+i}) (q^{\lambda_2+\lambda_1-n-1} - q^{-\lambda_2-\lambda_1+n+1})}{(q^{\lambda_2+\lambda_1+1-n} - q^{-\lambda_2-\lambda_1-1+n}) (q^{\lambda_2+i-n} - q^{-\lambda_2-i+n})}.$$

The structure of the vectors u_n^i for U_{λ_1-2} is depicted in Figure 3.

Remark 4.8. The basis $\{u_n^i\}_n^i$ of the kernel of $\pi_\lambda(B_1)$ is not an orthogonal basis. In fact, it follows from Remark 4.7 that

$$u_0^{\lambda_1-1} = F_2^{\lambda_1-1} F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda + \gamma_{\lambda_1-2, 0}^0 F_2^{\lambda_1-2} F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda,$$

$$u_1^{\lambda_1-1} = F_2^{\lambda_1-1} \hat{F}_3 F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda + \gamma_{\lambda_1-2, 1}^1 F_2^{\lambda_1-2} \hat{F}_3 F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda + \gamma_{\lambda_1-2, 2}^1 F_2^{\lambda_1-2} F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda,$$

and therefore

$$\langle u_0^{\lambda_1-1}, u_1^{\lambda_1-1} \rangle = \gamma_{\lambda_1-2, 0}^0 \gamma_{\lambda_1-2, 2}^1 H_{\lambda_1-2, 0, \lambda_1-1} \neq 0,$$

using the explicit expressions (4.4).

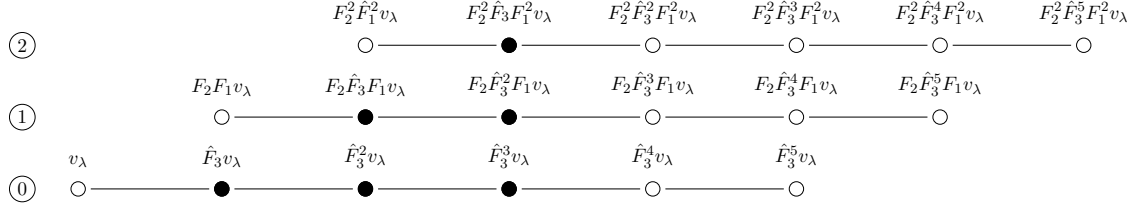


FIGURE 3. Structure of the basis $(u_n^0)_n$ of $\ker(B_1)|_{U_0}$ for the representation $\lambda = 2\varpi_1 + 5\varpi_2$ as in Figure 1. The black circles indicate the terms that contribute to the expression of the element $u_1^0 = F_2^2 \hat{F}_3 F_1^2 v_\lambda + \dots$.

4.2. The action of C_1 . In Remark 4.2 we observed that the kernel of B_1 is stable under the action of C_1 . Furthermore for each $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, U_i is stable under C_1 . The goal of this subsection is to compute the action of C_1 in the basis of $\ker \pi_\lambda(B_1)$ given in Proposition 4.6.

Lemma 4.9. *In the basis \mathcal{B} of Theorem 2.3 we have*

$$\begin{aligned}
F_1 F_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda &= a_{k+1}(l, k+i) F_2^{k+1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i+1} v_\lambda + b_{k+1}(l, k+i) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda, \\
E_2 F_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda &= \eta_{k+1}(l, k+i) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda, \\
F_1 E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda &= \alpha_k(l, k+i) a_k(l, k+i-1) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda \\
&\quad + \alpha_k(l, k+i) b_k(l, k+i-1) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^{l+1} F_1^{k+i-1} v_\lambda \\
&\quad + \beta_k(l, k+i) a_{k+1}(l-1, k+i) F_2^{k+1} \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^{k+i+1} v_\lambda \\
&\quad + \beta_k(l, k+i) b_{k+1}(l-1, k+i) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda, \\
E_2 E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda &= \alpha_k(l, k+i) \eta_k(l, k+i-1) F_2^{k-1} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i-1} v_\lambda \\
&\quad + \beta_k(l, k+i) \eta_{k+1}(l-1, k+i) F_2^k \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda, \\
K F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda &= q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2-3i} F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda, \\
K^{-1} F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda &= q^{\lambda_2-\lambda_1+3i} F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda.
\end{aligned}$$

Proof. The lemma is a direct consequence of Proposition 2.4. \square

Since K acts as a multiple of the identity on each U_i , it suffices to determine the action of $B_1 B_2$ on U_i .

Lemma 4.10. *For $i \in 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, in the basis $(u_n^i)_n$ of $\ker(B_1)$, we have*

$$B_1 B_2 u_n^i = A(n) u_{n+1}^i + B(n) u_n^i + C(n) u_{n-1}^i, \quad n = 0, \dots, \lambda_2,$$

where

$$\begin{aligned}
A(n) &= \frac{q^{\lambda_2+i-n}(1-q^2)(1-q^{2\lambda_1+2\lambda_2-2n})}{(1-q^{2\lambda_2+2\lambda_1-2n+2})(1-q^{2\lambda_2+2i-2n})}, \\
B(n) &= -c_1 \frac{q^{2n+i-\lambda_1-\lambda_2}(1-q^{2\lambda_2-2n+2i})}{(1-q^2)} + \frac{c_2 q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2+2n-i+1}(1-q^{-2n-2i})}{(1-q^2)}, \\
C(n) &= \frac{c_1 c_2 q^{3n-3\lambda_2-i-2}(1-q^{2n})(1-q^{2\lambda_2-2n+2})(1-q^{2\lambda_1+2\lambda_2-2n+4})(1-q^{2\lambda_2+2i+2-2n})}{(1-q^2)^3(1-q^{2\lambda_2+2\lambda_1+2-2n})}.
\end{aligned}$$

Proof. Since U_i is stable under $B_1 B_2$ and $(u_n^i)_n$ is a basis of U_i , we have

$$B_1 B_2 u_n^i = \sum_{j=0}^{\lambda_2} \nu_j u_j^i,$$

for certain coefficients ν_j . Since \mathcal{B}_i is an orthogonal basis and u_n^i has a single contribution from the vectors in the upper layer of \mathcal{B}_i , see Remark 4.7, we obtain that

$$\langle B_1 B_2 u_n^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = \sum_{j=0}^{\lambda_2} \nu_j \langle u_j^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = \nu_s H_{\lambda_1-i, s, \lambda_1}^2.$$

On the other hand, from (3.1) we have

$$(4.5) \quad B_1 B_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda = F_1 F_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda - c_1 q^{l+k+2i-1-\lambda_1} E_2 F_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda \\ - c_2 q^{k+l-i-\lambda_2} F_1 E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda + c_1 c_2 q^{2l+2k+i-\lambda_1-\lambda_2-2} E_2 E_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda.$$

Applying Lemma 4.9 to (4.5), we verify that the action of $B_1 B_2$ on the vector of the k -th layer $F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^{k+i} v_\lambda$ has contributions from the $(k-1)$ -th, k -th and $(k+1)$ -th layer. Hence, Remark 4.7 implies

$$(4.6) \quad \langle B_1 B_2 u_n^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = \langle B_1 B_2 F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle \\ + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n \langle B_1 B_2 F_2^{\lambda_1-i-1} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle \\ + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n \langle B_1 B_2 F_2^{\lambda_1-i-1} \hat{F}_3^{n-1} F_1^{\lambda_1-1} v_\lambda, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^s F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle.$$

From Lemma 4.9 we obtain that (4.6) is zero unless $s = n-1, n, n+1$. Moreover, we have

$$\langle B_1 B_2 u_n^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^{n+1} F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = [b_{\lambda_1-i+1}(n, \lambda_1) + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n a_{\lambda_1-i}(n+1, \lambda_1-1)] H_{\lambda_1-i, n+1, \lambda_1}^2, \\ \langle B_1 B_2 u_n^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^n F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = [-c_1 q^{n+i-1} \eta_{\lambda_1-i+1}(l, \lambda_1) \\ - c_2 q^{\lambda_1+n-2i-\lambda_2} \alpha_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1) a_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1-1) \\ - c_2 q^{\lambda_1-2i+n-\lambda_2} \beta_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1) b_{\lambda_1-i+1}(n-1, \lambda_1) + \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n a_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1-1) \\ - c_2 q^{\lambda_1+n-2i-\lambda_2} \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n+1}^n \beta_{\lambda_1-i-1}(n+1, \lambda_1-1) a_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1-1)] H_{\lambda_1-i, n, \lambda_1}^2, \\ \langle B_1 B_2 u_n^i, F_2^{\lambda_1-i} \hat{F}_3^{n-1} F_1^{\lambda_1} v_\lambda \rangle = [c_1 c_2 q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2+2n-i-2} \beta_{\lambda_1-i}(n, \lambda_1) \eta_{\lambda_1-i+1}(n-1, \lambda_1) \\ - c_2 q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2+n-2i-1} \gamma_{\lambda_1-i-1, n}^n \beta_{\lambda_1-i-1}(n, \lambda_1-1) a_{\lambda_1-i}(n-1, \lambda_1-1)] H_{\lambda_1-i, n-1, \lambda_1}^2.$$

Now the lemma follows from Proposition 2.4 and (4.4). \square

Lemma 4.11. *For $i \in 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, in the basis $(u_n^i)_n$ of $\ker(B_1)$, we have*

$$C_1 u_n^i = A(n) u_{n+1}^i + (B(n) + D) u_n^i + C(n) u_{n-1}^i, \quad D = -c_2 \frac{q^{\lambda_1-\lambda_2-3i}}{q-q^{-1}} + c_1 \frac{q^{\lambda_2-\lambda_1+3i}(q+q^{-1})}{q-q^{-1}}.$$

Proof. Lemma 4.10, (3.3) and K acting as a multiple of the identity give the result. \square

We are now ready to find the eigenvectors of C_1 restricted to $\ker(B_1)|_{U_i}$. We will describe these eigenvectors as a linear combination of the vectors u_n^i with explicit coefficients given

in terms of dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials. For $N \in \mathbb{N}$ and $n = 0, 1, \dots, N$, the dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials are given explicitly by

$$K_n(\lambda(x); c, N|q) = \frac{(q^{x-N}; q)_n}{(q^{-N}; q)_n q^{nx}} {}_2\phi_1 \left(\begin{matrix} q^{-n}, q^{-x} \\ q^{N-x-n+1} \end{matrix} \middle| q, cq^{x+1} \right),$$

where $\lambda(x) = q^{-x} + cq^{x-N}$, see [7, (3.17.1)]. We follow the standard notation of [4] for basic hypergeometric series. The polynomials

$$(4.7) \quad r_l(\lambda(x)) = (q^{-2N}; q)_l K_l(\lambda(x); c, N|q^2),$$

satisfy the three term recurrence relation

$$(4.8) \quad x r_l(x) = r_{l+1}(x) + (1+c)q^{2l-2N} r_l(x) + cq^{-2N}(1-q^{2l})(1-q^{2l-2N-2}) r_{l-1}(x).$$

Proposition 4.12. *For $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, the set $\{\psi_x^i\}_{x=0}^{\lambda_2}$ where*

$$\psi_x^i = \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \frac{c_1^l q^{-l(\lambda_1+2)+l(l-1)/2} (q^{-2\lambda_2}, q^{-2\lambda_2-2\lambda_1}; q^2)_l}{(q^{-2\lambda_2-2\lambda_1-2}, q^{-2\lambda_2-2i}; q^2)_l} K_l(\lambda(x), -c_1^{-1}c_2 q^{2\lambda_1-2i+1}, \lambda_2, q^2) u_l^i,$$

is a basis of eigenvectors of C_1 restricted to $\ker(B_1)|_{U_i}$. The eigenvalue of ψ_x^i is

$$\eta_1 = \frac{c_1 \kappa^{-1} q(1 + q^{-2n-2}) - c_2 \kappa q^{2n}}{q - q^{-1}},$$

for $\kappa = q^{\lambda_1-3i-\lambda_2}$ and $n = x + i$.

Remark 4.13. As we pointed out in Remark 4.8, the basis $(u_n^i)_n$ is not orthogonal. Still the operator C_1 acts tridiagonally. Moreover, if \mathcal{B} is $*$ -invariant then the basis $\{\psi_x^i\}_{x=0}^{\lambda_2}$ in Proposition 4.12 is orthogonal although, because of the non-orthogonality of $(u_n^i)_n$, this does not follow directly from the orthogonality of the dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials.

Proof. Assume there exist polynomials $p_n(x)$ such that $v = \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} p_l(x) u_l^i$ is an eigenvector of C_1 with eigenvalue η_1 , i.e. $C_1 v = \eta_1 v$. From Lemma 4.11 we have

$$C_1 v = \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} p_l(x) (A(l)u_{l+1}^i + (B(l) + D)u_l^i + C(l)u_{l-1}^i) = \sum_{l=0}^{\lambda_2} \eta_1 p_l(x) u_l^i.$$

Since $(u_l^i)_l$ is a basis of $\ker(B_1)|_{U_i}$ the vectors u_l^i are linearly independent and hence the polynomials p_l satisfy the following three term recurrence relation

$$\eta_1 p_l(x) = C(l+1)p_{l+1}(x) + (B(l) + D)p_l(x) + A(l-1)p_{l-1}(x).$$

If k_l is the leading coefficient of p_l , then $P_l = k_l^{-1}p_l$ is a sequence of monic polynomials satisfying the recurrence relation

$$(4.9) \quad \eta_1 P_l(x) = P_{l+1}(x) + (B(l) + D)P_l(x) + C(l)A(l-1)P_{l-1}(x),$$

where

$$B(l) + D = -\frac{c_1 q^{2l+i-\lambda_1-\lambda_2}(1 - c_1^{-1}c_2 q^{2\lambda_1-2i+1})}{(1 - q^2)} - \frac{c_1 q^{3i-\lambda_1+\lambda_2+2}}{(1 - q^2)},$$

$$C(l)A(l-1) = -\frac{c_1 c_2 q(1 - q^{2l})(1 - q^{2l-2\lambda_2-2})}{(1 - q^2)^2},$$

using Lemma 4.10 and Lemma 4.11. We will identify the polynomials P_l with the dual q -Krawtchouk polynomials. If we let

$$c = -c_1^{-1} c_2 q^{2\lambda_1 - 2i + 1}, \quad N = \lambda_2,$$

the recurrence relation (4.8) is given by

$$\begin{aligned} x r_l(x) &= r_{l+1}(x) + (1 + c_1^{-1} c_2 q^{2\lambda_1 - 2i + 1}) q^{2l - 2\lambda_2} r_l(x) \\ &\quad + c_1^{-1} c_2 q^{2\lambda_1 - 2\lambda_2 - 2i + 1} (1 - q^{2l}) (1 - q^{2l - 2\lambda_2 - 2}) r_{l-1}(x). \end{aligned}$$

If we let $\tilde{r}_l(x) = a^{-l} r_l(ax)$ with $a = -c_1^{-1} q^{\lambda_1 - \lambda_2 - i} (1 - q^2)$, by a straightforward computation we obtain

$$(4.10) \quad \left(x - \frac{c_1 q^{3i - \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + 2}}{(1 - q^2)} \right) \tilde{r}_l(x) = \tilde{r}_{l+1}(x) + (B(l) + D) \tilde{r}_l(x) + C(l) A(l - 1) \tilde{r}_{l-1}(x).$$

If we evaluate (4.10) in $\lambda(x)a^{-1}$, the eigenvalue is given by

$$\frac{\lambda(x)}{a} - \frac{c_1 q^{3i - \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + 2}}{(1 - q^2)} = \frac{c_1 q^{3i - \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + 2} (1 + q^{-2x - 2i - 2}) + c_2 q^{\lambda_1 - \lambda_2 - i + 2x}}{q - q^{-1}}.$$

Therefore the polynomials $P_l(x) = \tilde{r}(\lambda(x)a^{-1}) = a^{-l} r_l(\lambda(x))$ satisfy the recurrence (4.9) with eigenvalue

$$\eta_1 = \frac{c_1 \kappa^{-1} q (1 + q^{-2n - 2}) - c_2 \kappa q^{2n}}{q - q^{-1}},$$

with $\kappa = q^{\lambda_1 - 3i - \lambda_2}$ and $n = x + i$, for $x = 0, \dots, \lambda_2$. Finally, $p_l(x) = k_l a^{-1} r_l(\lambda(x))$. The explicit expression of p_l follows from (4.7) and Lemma 4.10. \square

Proof of Theorem 4.1. From Proposition 4.12 we obtain vectors ψ_x^i for $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, $x = 0, \dots, \lambda_2$ such that

$$\pi_\lambda(B_1) \psi_x^i = 0, \quad \text{and} \quad C_1 \psi_x^i = \frac{c_1 \kappa^{-1} q (1 + q^{-2n - 2}) - c_2 \kappa q^{2n}}{q - q^{-1}} \psi_x^i = \eta_1 \psi_x^i.$$

where $\kappa = q^{\lambda_1 - 3i - \lambda_2}$ and $n = x + i$, so that ψ_x^i is a highest weight vector. It follows from Corollary 3.6 that the highest weight vector ψ_x^i defines an irreducible representation of \mathcal{B} of dimension $x + i + 1$

$$W_{q^{\lambda_1 - \lambda_2 - 3i}, x+i} = \langle \{ \psi_x^i, \pi_\lambda(B_2) \psi_x^i, \pi_\lambda(B_2)^2 \psi_x^i, \dots, \pi_\lambda(B_2)^{x+i} \psi_x^i \} \rangle.$$

Let $W = \oplus_{(\kappa, n)} W_{(\kappa, n)}$ where the sum is taken over $(\kappa, n) = (q^{\lambda_1 - 3i - \lambda_2}, x + i)$ for $i = 0, \dots, \lambda_1$, $x = 0, \dots, \lambda_2$. We have that $W \subset V_\lambda$ and

$$\dim W = \sum_{i, x} \dim W_{q^{\lambda_1 - \lambda_2 - 3i}, x+i} = \frac{1}{2} (\lambda_1 + 1) (\lambda_2 + 1) (\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + 2) = \dim V_\lambda.$$

Therefore $W = V_\lambda$ and this completes the proof of the theorem. \square

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APPENDIX A. PROOF OF THEOREM 2.3

Lemma A.1. *The following relations hold in $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))$:*

- (i) $F_2 \hat{F}_3[a] = \hat{F}_3[a+1] F_2$,
- (ii) $E_1 \hat{F}_3[a] = \hat{F}_3[a+1] E_1 + F_2 \frac{(q^{a+1} K_1 K_2 - q^{-a-1} (K_1 K_2)^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})}$,
- (iii) $F_2 F_3 = q F_3 F_2$,
- (iv) $(\hat{F}_3[a])^* = q \hat{E}_3[a] (K_1 K_2)^{-1}$, $F_3^* = q E_3 (K_1 K_2)^{-1}$,
- (v) $\hat{F}_3 = F_3 \frac{q K_2 - q^{-1} K_2^{-1}}{q - q^{-1}} + q F_2 F_1 K_2$,
- (vi) $E_1 F_3 = F_3 E_1 + F_2 K_1$,

Proof. Straightforward verifications using (2.1) and (2.3). □

Corollary A.2. *For $l \in \mathbb{N}$ and $a \in \mathbb{R}$ we have*

$$E_1 (\hat{F}_3[a])^l = (\hat{F}_3[a+1])^l E_1 + \frac{q^l - q^{-l}}{q - q^{-1}} F_2 (\hat{F}_3[a])^{l-1} \frac{(q^{a+2-l} K_1 K_2 - q^{-a-2+l} (K_1 K_2)^{-1})}{(q - q^{-1})}$$

Proof. By induction on l using Lemma A.1(ii) and (i). □

Proof of Theorem 2.3. By the PBW-theorem, $F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$ for $k, l, m \in \mathbb{N}$ spans V_λ . By Proposition 2.4

$$(A.1) \quad \begin{aligned} K_1 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda &= q^{\lambda_1 + k - l - 2m} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \\ K_2 F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda &= q^{\lambda_2 - 2k - l + m} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda. \end{aligned}$$

Since K_i , $i = 1, 2$, are self-adjoint, we find that $\langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle = 0$ in case $k - l - 2m \neq k' - l' - 2m'$ or $-2k - l + m \neq -2k' - l' + m'$. For $k' > k$ we find

$$(A.2) \quad \begin{aligned} \langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle &= \langle (E_2 K_2^{-1})^{k'} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= q^{k'(k'+1)} \langle K_2^{-k'} E_2^{k'} F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle = 0, \end{aligned}$$

since $E_i^{k'} F_i^k \in \mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3)) E_i^{k'-k}$ for $k, k' \in \mathbb{N}$, $k' > k$, using also Lemma 2.1(ii) for $a = 0$, (2.1) and (2.4). Because of the symmetry between k and k' , we see that the inner product (A.2) is 0 for $k \neq k'$. With the above remark, we find

$$\langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^{k'} \hat{F}_3^{l'} F_1^{m'} v_\lambda \rangle = 0$$

in case $k \neq k'$ or $l \neq l'$ or $m \neq m'$.

So it suffices to calculate the norm of the vectors, and see that this is non-zero precisely for the range mentioned. First, using the case $k = k'$ of the first part of (A.2) and that K_2 acts on $E_2^k F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda$ by the scalar $q^{\lambda_2 - l + m}$, we find

$$\langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle = q^{k(k+1) - k(\lambda_2 - l + m)} \langle E_2^k F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle.$$

Now use Lemma 2.2(ii) for $i = 2$ and next the commutation relations of Lemma 2.1(ii) and (2.1) to see that the $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{su}(3))E_2$ -part of Lemma 2.2(ii) gives zero contribution. Because of the action of K_2 being diagonal, we find

$$\langle F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_2^k \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle = \frac{(q^2; q^2)_k}{(1 - q^2)^{2k}} (q^{-2(\lambda_2 - l + m)}; q^2)_k (-1)^k q^{3k} \langle \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle$$

Next we write

$$\langle \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda \rangle = \langle \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, F_1^m \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle = q^{m(m+1)} q^{-m(\lambda_1 - l)} \langle E_1^m \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle$$

using Lemma 2.1(i), the $*$ -structure (2.3), (2.1) and (A.1). Following Mudrov [19, §8] we replace \hat{F}_3^l on the left by F_3^l . First use Lemma A.1(v)

$$\begin{aligned} \langle E_1^m \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle &= \frac{q^{2+\lambda_2-l+m} - q^{-2-\lambda_2+l-m}}{q - q^{-1}} \langle E_1^m F_3 \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle \\ &\quad + q^{2+\lambda_2-l+m} \langle E_1^m F_2 F_1 \hat{F}_3^{l-1} F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle \end{aligned}$$

In the second term, move F_2 to the left using (2.1), and then the other side so that is essentially an E_2 which we can move through, by Lemma 2.1(ii), to the highest weight vector, and hence gives zero. This we can repeat, since F_2 also q -commutes with F_3 by Lemma A.1(iii). This yields

$$\langle E_1^m \hat{F}_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle = \frac{(-1)^l q^{l(2+\lambda_2+m)} q^{-\frac{1}{2}l(l-1)}}{(1 - q^2)^l} (q^{-\lambda_2-2-m}; q^2)_l \langle E_1^m F_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle.$$

Using Lemma A.1(vi), and moving F_2 to the other side, where F_2^* kills $\hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda$, we see

$$\langle E_1^m F_3^l F_1^m v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle = (-1)^m q^{-m(m-2)+m\lambda_1} \frac{(q^2; q^2)_m}{(1 - q^2)^{2m}} (q^{-2\lambda_1}; q^2)_m \langle F_3^l v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle$$

by Lemma 2.2(ii). Assume $l \geq 1$, so it remains to calculate

$$\begin{aligned} \langle F_3^l v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle &= \langle F_3^{l-1} v_\lambda, (F_3)^* \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle = q^{1-(\lambda_1+\lambda_2-2l)} \langle F_3^{l-1} v_\lambda, (E_2 E_1 - E_1 E_2) \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle \\ &= q^{1-(\lambda_1+\lambda_2-2l)} \langle F_3^{l-1} v_\lambda, E_2 E_1 \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle \end{aligned}$$

where we use Lemma A.1(iv), the diagonal action of K_i and the fact that the action of $E_1 E_2$ is zero by Lemma 2.1(ii) and (2.4). By Corollary A.2 for $a = 0$ and (2.4) we find

$$E_1 \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda = \frac{q^l - q^{-l}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q^{2+\lambda_1+\lambda_2-l} - q^{-2-\lambda_1-\lambda_2+l}}{q - q^{-1}} F_2 \hat{F}_3^{l-1} v_\lambda$$

and next applying E_2 , using (2.1), (2.4) and Lemma 2.1(ii) we find

$$E_2 E_1 \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda = \frac{q^l - q^{-l}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q^{2+\lambda_1+\lambda_2-l} - q^{-2-\lambda_1-\lambda_2+l}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q^{\lambda_2-l+1} - q^{-\lambda_2+l-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \hat{F}_3^{l-1} v_\lambda,$$

so that

$$\begin{aligned} \langle F_3^l v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle &= q^{1-(\lambda_1+\lambda_2-2l)} \frac{q^l - q^{-l}}{q - q^{-1}} \\ &\quad \times \frac{q^{2+\lambda_1+\lambda_2-l} - q^{-2-\lambda_1-\lambda_2+l}}{q - q^{-1}} \frac{q^{\lambda_2-l+1} - q^{-\lambda_2+l-1}}{q - q^{-1}} \langle F_3^{l-1} v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^{l-1} v_\lambda \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Iterating, since we normalize $\langle v_\lambda, v_\lambda \rangle = 1$, we find

$$\langle F_3^l v_\lambda, \hat{F}_3^l v_\lambda \rangle = q^{l(\lambda_2+7)} q^{-\frac{1}{2}l(l+1)} \frac{(q^2; q^2)_l}{(1 - q^2)^{3l}} (q^{-2\lambda_2}; q^2)_l (q^{-2(\lambda_1+\lambda_2+1)}; q^2)_l.$$

Note that this expression is positive for $0 \leq l \leq \lambda_2$ and equals zero for $l > \lambda_2$. Collecting all the intermediate results gives the explicit expression for the norm of the basis elements. \square

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IMAPP, RADBOUD UNIVERSITEIT, PO Box 9010, 6500 GL NIJMEGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

E-mail address: `n.aldenhoven@math.ru.nl`, `e.koelink@math.ru.nl`

CIEM, FAMAF, UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CÓRDOBA, MEDINA ALLENDE S/N CIUDAD UNIVERSITARIA, CÓRDOBA, ARGENTINA

E-mail address: `roman@famaf.unc.edu.ar`